

Group II. Claims 45-55, drawn to a product.

Applicants elect to prosecute Group I, claims 1-44, 56-57.

Furthermore, the Examiner alleges that the claims are directed towards the following distinct species:

Species A: a specific contact material from claims 4-7;

Species B: a specific anion component for claims 10, 11, 12, 14, 37, 38, 39, 41, 46, 47, 48, 50, 55;

Species C: a specific cation component for claims 15, 16, 42, 43, 51, 52;

Species D: a specific ionic liquid for claims 17, 44, 53, 54; and

Species E: a specific lignin-containing material for claim 22.

For Species A, Applicants provisionally elect 1-ethyl-3-methylimidazolium xylene sulfonate. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 4-7 read on this election.

For Species B, Applicants provisionally elect xylene sulfonate, which is an alkyl benzene sulfonate anion, for example a di-methylbenzene sulfonate anion. Claims 10-13, 37-41, 46-48, 50 and 55 read on this election.

For Species C, Applicants provisionally elect 1-ethyl-3-methylimidazolium. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 15, 16, 42, 43, 51 and 52.

For Species D, Applicants provisionally a substituted imidazolium salt of a substituted aryl sulfonated. A preferred member of this species is 1-ethyl-3-methylimidazolium xylene sulfonate. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 17, 44, 53 and 54 read on this election.

For Species E, Applicants provisionally “material proximately or ultimately derived from plants”. Claim 22 reads on this election. Applicants respectfully note that such material is described as “lignocellulosic material” in claim 24, but the Examiner specifically excluded claim 24 from the election requirement of Species E.

Applicants respectfully submit that any of the claims that are directed to a non-elected species depend from generic claims. Upon indication of allowance of the generic claims, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the claims directed towards the non-elected species.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-2461. Such authorization includes authorization to charge fees for extensions of time, if any, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 and also should be treated as a constructive petition for an extension of time in this reply or any future reply pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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